

NATIONAL EPA-TRIBAL SCIENCE COUNCIL

Conference Call Summary

Monday, August 20, 2012

2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Saving Time

Participants

Ted Coopwood

Tribal Science Council Agency Co-Chair
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Children's Health Protection and
Environmental Education
Phone: (202) 564-2197
Email: coopwood.theodore@epa.gov

Monica Rodia

Tribal Science Council Executive Secretary
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Research and Development
Phone: (202) 564-8322
Email: rodia.monica@epa.gov

Ken Bailey

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Science Policy
Phone: (513) 569-7841
Email: bailey.ken@epa.gov

Sirirat (Tia) Chullakorn

Kashia Band of Pomo Indians of the Stewarts
Point Rancheria (Region 9)
Phone: (707) 591-0580, ext. 113
Email: u2sc@yahoo.com

Mike Durglo

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of the
Flathead Reservation (Region 8)
Phone: (406) 883-2888
Email: miked@cskt.org

Brenda Groskinsky

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 7
Phone: (913) 551-7188
Email: groskinsky.brenda@epa.gov

Blake Huff

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 8
Phone: (303) 312-6718
Email: huff.blake@epa.gov

Denise Jensen

Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska (Region 7)
Phone: (402) 878-4060
Email: winnewater@huntel.net

Lon Kissinger

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 10
Phone: (206) 553-2115
Email: kissinger.lon@epa.gov

James Leathers

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 6
Phone: (214) 665-6569
Email: leathers.james@epa.gov

Marissa McInnis

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
American Indian Environmental Office
Phone: (202) 564-2467
Email: mcinnis.marissa@epa.gov

Cynthia McOliver

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Research and Development
Phone: (703) 347-0311
Email: mcoliver.cynthia@epa.gov

John Mosley

Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (Region 9)
Phone: (775) 574-0101, ext. 13
Email: jmosley@plpt.nsn.us

Dennis O'Connor

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Air and Radiation
Phone: (202) 343-9213
Email: oconnor.dennis@epa.gov

Amanda Patterson

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Environmental Information
Phone: (202) 566-0603
Email: patterson.amanda@epa.gov

Katie Renwick

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
Phone: (828) 497-1832
Email: katerenw@nc-chokeee.com

Caren Robinson

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution
Prevention
Phone: (202) 564-0544
Email: robinson.caren@epa.gov

Matthew Small

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 9
Phone: (415) 972-3366
Email: small.matthew@epa.gov

Kai Tang

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 2
Phone: (732) 321-4364
Email: tang.kai@epa.gov

Bill Thompson

Penobscot Indian Nation (Region 1)
Phone: (207) 817-7308
Email: bill.thompson@penobscotnation.org

Lee Juan Tyler

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Region 10)
Phone: (208) 478-3814
Email: ltyler@shoshonebannocktribes.com

Patti Tyler

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 8
Phone: (303) 312-6081
Email: tyler.patti@epa.gov

Edward Washburn

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Research and Development
Phone: (202) 566-1886
Email: washburn.edward@epa.gov

Janice Whitney

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 2
Phone: (212) 637-3790
Email: whitney.janice@epa.gov

Felicia Wright

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Water
Phone: (202) 566-1886
Email: wright.felicia@epa.gov

Contractor Support

David Bear Carrillo

DBC Consulting
Phone: (703) 626-1619
Email: beartowork@me.com

Kristen LeBaron

The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc.
Phone: (301) 670-4990
Email: klebaron@scgcorp.com

Welcome

Monica Rodia, Executive Secretary of the National EPA-Tribal Science Council (TSC), welcomed the members to the teleconference. She explained that the format of the teleconferences has changed and roll call now will be taken during the middle of each conference call to minimize interruptions. She introduced Bill Thompson, Vice Chief of the Penobscot Indian Nation, who will serve as the new Region 1 Tribal representative. Bill said that he is a Penobscot citizen with a background in water quality. Ted Coopwood welcomed Bill too and said he looked forward to his contributions to the TSC.

May and June Business Meeting Minutes

Monica reported that the May business meeting minutes have been reviewed finalized and distributed to the TSC members and are now part of the official record. The June face-to-face meeting business meeting minutes have been distributed to the TSC members for review, and there is still time to comment through August 29th. Monica reiterated that members who are unable to attend meetings should read the minutes so that they are aware of TSC activities.

Report From the Spring 2012 Business Meeting

Ted Coopwood thanked the Tribal Caucus members for their efforts during the spring meeting, which resulted in a foundation for the planned Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Workshop. The Tribal Caucus members' vision, expertise and understanding of tribal culture provided a clear focus of what the TSC needs in terms of TEK, which is to train its own members. He thanked the Tribal Caucus for its leadership in planning the TEK Workshop. Ted also acknowledged the TSC members for their input on the TSC Overview document, which reflects the TSC's vision and will allow the Council to move forward with a clearly defined role for implementation during the tribal science priority process. He added minor, clarifying modifications still need to be made to the document with input and approval of all TSC members, and the next step will be to schedule Caucus meetings to discuss these modifications and finalize the document. Finally, Ted thanked John Mosley and the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe for hosting the meeting and organizing presentations and tours.

Marissa McInnis thanked the TSC for allowing the Tribal ecoAmbassadors to present at the meeting. The feedback on the projects has been beneficial, and the ecoAmbassadors are excited to engage the TSC members in the future. She thought that the interaction between the TSC members and ecoAmbassadors at the meeting was successful. Ted said that he is excited about the opportunities available to work with the Tribal ecoAmbassador Program and engage in dialogue about how the two TSPs can be woven into the studies and projects to benefit everyone involved. Marissa said that she is developing a report highlighting the first year of the Tribal ecoAmbassador Program and asked those TSC members with pictures of the ecoAmbassadors from the meeting to please send them to her via email. Monica volunteered to send some pictures.

Roll Call

Monica took roll of those present on the teleconference. She reported that James Leathers would be leaving the TSC to pursue a career opportunity within Region 6. She and Ted thanked him for his service to the TSC. James said that it had been an honor and privilege to serve on the Council.

TSC December 2012 Business Meeting

Monica reported that the fall business meeting would be held December 4–6, 2012 in Seattle, Washington. She is working with Jim Woods, member of the Makah Nation and Region 10 Senior Tribal

Policy Advisor. Monica reported that the Tulalip Tribes have tentatively offered to host the meeting, and additional information will be available after possible federal sites are explored in the area.

An Agenda Development Team (ADT) has been formed to prepare the agenda for the last few face-to-face meetings, and it has been a successful endeavor. Monica encouraged those who have not served on the ADT to volunteer via email. This provides the members with a great opportunity to develop their ideas and get to know other TSC members better prior to the face-to-face meeting. The ADT has been very beneficial in quickly developing a dynamic agenda.

Monica explained that this is an election year for the TSC Co-Chairs. The Tribal Co-Chair is determined automatically in reverse order by region number; therefore, the Tribal Representative for Region 4 is expected to be the new Co-Chair. The EPA Caucus will submit nominations and vote for the Agency Co-Chair in November so that the new Co-Chairs will preside over the face-to-face meeting in December.

TEK Training Workshop

Katie Renwick explained that during the Spring 2012 Face-to-Face Meeting the Tribal Caucus decided to plan the TEK Workshop for June 18–20, 2013, rather than for fall 2012 to allow additional time for planning. As Katie reported during the meeting, the Tribal Air Monitoring Support (TAMS) Steering Committee's TEK subcommittee has volunteered to help plan the workshop. Ted added that three locations/hosts were being considered for the workshop: upstate New York, Haskell Indian Nations University and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. In response to a question from a TSC member, Katie explained that Katsi Cook, a midwife involved with the Fort Peck Community College Tribal ecoAmbassador project, was very interested in having the TEK Workshop at Eastern Band, as she has worked with the tribe before. She has provided additional points of contact within the tribe for Katie to pursue. Katie also stated that Katsi is a fellow with Reach the Decision Makers, a program established by the University of California, San Francisco Program on Reproductive Health and the Environment; Reach the Decision Makers has been discussing with the Agency a summit on reproductive health.

Lee Juan Tyler explained that his tribe has opened a new four-star hotel and events center (<http://www.shobanhotel.com/hotel.php>), and the tribe is interested in hosting a future TSC meeting. There are many different locations of interest in the areas that could serve as tour sites for the TSC. Monica said that the Tribal Caucus would be determining the location for the TEK Workshop during a Tribal Caucus teleconference, so Lee Juan could provide the information about hosting to the Tribal Caucus, which could add it to the list of sites currently being considered.

Brenda Groskinsky explained that Stanley Holder had spoken to representatives from Haskell. Stanley shared that he had met with representatives from Haskell, and the university is interested in hosting the TEK Workshop. The limitation may be space, and the TSC may need to work with the University of Kansas if there will be more than 200 attendees. Monica said that she did not envision that the meeting would have more than 60 attendees because the Tribal Caucus determined that the format would be internal TSC training; as such, only invited experts who will be presenting will attend in addition to the TSC members. The Region 7 representative asked whether there would be concurrent sessions during the workshop. Ted responded that the Tribal Caucus would determine the format of the workshop. Monica said that the Tribal Caucus had developed a framework that is outlined in the June meeting summary.

Brenda reported that there is not a funding mechanism identified within the Memorandum of Understanding that her region has with Haskell. She would like more guidance from the TSC about the appropriate questions to ask representatives from Haskell.

In response to a question from Patti Tyler, Monica and Ted explained that they were unsure when a decision would be made regarding the location of the workshop. Monica stated that information from Neil regarding locations in upstate New York had been sent to the TSC members via email.

In addition to Katie's idea about TAMS working with the TSC on the TEK Workshop, Monica shared that she and Janice Whitney (Regional Indian Coordinator in Region 1) had spoken a few weeks ago and proposed that two TEK subcommittees be formed—one for tribal groups and one for federal entities. In terms of the federal group, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has a good TEK program, and the TEK presentation from Kim Greenwood of the USGS has been well received during previous tribal meetings. These subcommittees should help identify areas of need (e.g., speakers, topics). Katie responded that the Tribal Caucus was receptive to the idea of working with the TAMS TEK subcommittee, and said she would approach the members about working with the TSC on the TEK Workshop during TAMS' upcoming face-to-face meeting.

Janice and Patti volunteered to serve on the federal TEK subcommittee. The core tribal team, which is developing the tribal agenda, includes Jeff Mears, Neil Patterson, Orville Huntington and Katie. Monica thought that integrating TAMS into the core team would be beneficial. She suggested that the Tribal Caucus discuss the TSC Overview document and plan the TEK Workshop with the TAMS members during its conference calls. In response to a question from Bear Carrillo, Monica explained that the calls with the TAMS members would not circumvent the Tribal Caucus conference calls. She envisioned that those Tribal Caucus members involved in the TEK planning could stay on the call with the TAMS members after the Tribal Caucus completed its other business. She had approached Jeff with this idea, and he had thought that it was a good idea. The conference calls will resume soon as there will be some TEK agenda items that need to be planned for the December meeting. The Tribal Caucus and the federal TEK subcommittee could work together to ensure that there are no gaps in the agenda, and the best method to accomplish this is to work with groups that are using TEK in their programs and activities. The better informed that the TSC is, the better it will be able to develop a successful agenda. The focus of the TSC-sponsored TEK Workshop will be from a tribal science and research perspective so that the workshop will be unique compared to other TEK workshops. The TSC must determine current TEK research to accomplish this, and looking into current TEK programs within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is a good place to start the discussion in terms of federal programs. She emphasized that the TEK Workshop will be a training workshop.

Lee Juan said that it was important for decision makers to be trained in TEK. The TEK Workshop needs to result in positive changes in decision making. Monica agreed that change is needed. It was determined at the TSC meeting in Reno that the TSC needs to be prepared and take small steps in bringing about this change. The Tribal Caucus thought that the first step should be internal training. The TSC would like to effect change but must start at the beginning. The TEK Workshop is a good start. Ted agreed and stated that the TSC must understand TEK impacts and issues, which will provide the Council with a foundation on which to build to ultimately effect change.

Announcements

Ted announced that the Climate Change Adaptation Forum, which will focus on food security and traditional plant use, is being hosted by the Center for Indigenous Environmental Resources in Akwesasne (St. Regis Mohawk), September 18–20, 2012. He and Monica will be attending the meeting to learn about issues, how to more effectively implement ideas, what tribal interventions are occurring regarding climate change in tribal nations and communities, and how EPA can take more effective actions to implement better standards to meet the requirements that the Tribal Caucus has requested in terms of the climate change TSP. Janice said that the workshop will include a number of elders, time for the tribes

to report their observations, and time for federal personnel to determine how to build a bridge between TEK and modern science.

Ted thanked the members for participating, and Monica adjourned the conference call at 3:00 p.m.

Action Items

- ✧ TSC members who have pictures of the Tribal ecoAmbassadors from the spring business meeting will send them via email to Marissa.
- ✧ TSC members who are interested in serving on the ADT will contact Monica via email.
- ✧ Katie will approach TAMs members about serving on a tribal TEK subcommittee to help develop the TEK Workshop.

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CONFERENCE CALL

AUGUST 20, 2012

2:00 PM – 3:00 P.M. EASTERN DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Call-in Number: **866-299-3188**

Access Code: **2025648322#**

FINAL AGENDA

- 2:00 – 2:05 Welcome
- 2:05 – 2:10 Business Meeting Minutes
- May minutes distributed for review and finalized
 - June minutes distributed for review
- 2:10 – 2:25 Report From the Spring 2012 Business Meeting
- TSC Overview document
 - Schedule dates for caucuses to meet via Adobe Connect
 - Next steps to finalize Overview document
 - Tribal Caucus leadership on TEK
- 2:25 – 2:30 Roll Call
- 2:30 – 2:40 TSC December Business Meeting
- Dates: December 4–6, 2012, in Seattle, WA
 - Host: Tulalip Tribes (tentative)
 - Agenda Development Team (ADT) volunteers
 - Election of new TSC Co-Chairs
- 2:40 – 2:55 TEK Training Workshop
- Dates: June 18–20, 2013
 - Location and host to be determined
 - Discussion of possible meeting sites
 - Formation of TEK subcommittees (tribal and federal)
- 2:55 – 3:00 Announcements:
- Climate Change Adaptation Forum (focus on food security and traditional plant use) hosted by the Center for Indigenous Environmental Resources in Akwesasne (St. Regis Mohawk), September 18–20, 2012

Next conference call—*September 24, 2012, 2:00 – 3:00 pm EDT*